1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

173 The foregoing is far from historic proof that the Mandans did not at the times mentioned have their real base on the Missouri river. If they had been driven out of the "plains southwest of Lake Winnipeg" southward to the Missouri river about the end of the 17th century, which plains had been their own country, it seems hardly possible that they would not have so informed Verendrye in 1738—less than half a century after such ejection; nor would they have been likely to have forgotten it as a fresh tradition when Lewis and Clarke visited them. But if they had been hunting or marauding on those Canadian plains, and had failed to make permanent lodgment there as a home while really living on the Missouri, such rebuffs by the Crees and Assiniboines would be less consequential and might account for silence on the part of the Mandans concerning their Canadian campaigns. We continue the account from "Indian Sign Language:"

"Information given to the late General William Clarke in his expedition up the Missouri denotes that the Mandans have suffered greater vicissitudes of fortune than most of the American tribes."

361 **Walled Villages.** About a century ago they were settled on both banks of the Missouri some fifteen hundred miles above its mouth. They were then living in mire villages, surrounded by circular walls of earth without the adjunct of a ditch. The ruins of one of the old villages, observed in 1804, covered nearly eight acres and denoted a comparatively large population. Two of these villages were on the east and seven on the west side of the Missouri. They were first discovered and made known to us in this position in 1772. (Mitchell's letter herewith.)

•721 **Their Wars.** They appear to have been a hated tribe to the Dakotas, or Sioux, and Assiniboines, who from the earliest traditionary times carried on fierce war against them.

361 **Smallpox.** Finding themselves sorely pressed by this war and having experienced the wasting inroads of the smallpox the two 166 eastern villages united into one and migrated up the river to a point opposite to the Arickaree, fourteen hundred and thirty [164] miles above the mouth. The same causes soon pressed the other 721 seven western villages, reducing them to five; they also afterward migrated in a body and joined their tribesmen in the Arickaree country, and concentrated and settled themselves in two large villages. Here they dwelt for a time, but were still subject to

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

the fierce attacks of their enemies; and deeming the position unfavorable they removed higher up the river and took possession of a precipitous and tenable point of land formed by an involution of the Missouri, where they formed one compact village in 1776. The eastern Mandans had settled in two villages, but finding the attacks of the Sioux hard to be resisted united also in one village. The two divisions of Mandan villages were still separated by the Missouri river, but seated directly opposite each other about three miles apart, including lowlands. 361 166 720

The position is estimated to be sixteen hundred miles from the junction of the Missouri with the Mississippi. There they were visited by Lewis and Clarke on the 27th October, 1804. This was a memorable and an auspicious event in their history, as these intrepid American explorers determined to pass their first winter in this vicinity. They built Fort Mandan, a few miles distant, on a heavily wooded piece of bottom land, which yielded trees of sufficient size for erecting quarters for themselves and the men. They immediately opened an intercourse with the Mandans and established a friendship with them, which was strengthened by the incidents of a winter's residence." (pp. 239-240). 361 166

The following is an extract from Mr. Mitchell's letter above referred to: "The early portion of their history I gather from the narration of Mr. Macintosh, who, it seems, belonged to, or was in some way connected with the French Trading Company as far back as 1772. According to his narration, he set out from Montreal in the summer of 1773, crossed over the country to the Missouri river and arrived at one of the Mandan villages on Christmas day. He gives a long and somewhat romantic description of the manner in which he was received, and dwells at some length upon the greatness of the Mandan population, their superior intelligence and prowess in war. He says at that time the Mandans occupied nine large towns lying contiguous and could at short notice muster fifteen thousand mounted warriors." Clarke continues:

"*I am inclined to think that the statistics of the author whom* I have quoted are somewhat exaggerated, and at the time he visited the Missouri the Mandans were not so numerous as he represents. There are, however, the ruins of five villages in the neighborhood of the present village, which were evidently at one time occupied by the Mandans; and judging from the space which

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

increased by the strength of the fort, and the circumstances of our interpreters having both removed there with their families. These reports we did not fail to disprove to their entire satisfaction, and amused them with every attention, particularly by the dancing of the men, which diverted them highly. All the Indians whom Captain Lewis had visited were very well disposed, and received him with great kindness, except a principal chief of one of the upper villages, named Mahpahpaparapassatoo, or Horned Weasel, who made use of the civilized indecorum of refusing to be seen, and when Captain Lewis called, he was told the chief was not at home. In the course of the day seven of the Northwest company's traders arrived from the Assiniboine river, and one of their interpreters having undertaken to circulate among the Indians unfavorable reports, it became necessary to warn them of the consequences, if they did not desist from such proceedings. The river fell two inches today and the weather became very cold."

No British Flag. "About eight o'clock Poscopsahe came down to visit us, with some warriors; we gave them presents and entertained them with all that might amuse their curiosity, and at parting we told them that we had heard of the British trader, Mr. Laroche, having attempted to distribute medals and flags among them; but that those emblems could not be received from any other than the American nation, without incurring the displeasures of the great father, the president. They left us much pleased with their treatment." (id 182.)

Sioux Raid. "Friday, 30th. About eight o'clock an Indian came to the opposite bank of the river, calling out that he had something important to communicate, and on sending for him, he told us that five Mandans had been met about eight leagues to the southwest by a party of Sioux, who had killed one of them, wounded two, and taken nine horses; that four of the Wattasoons were missing, and that the Mandans expected an attack. We thought this an excellent opportunity to discountenance the injurious reports against us, and to fix the waivering confidence of the nation. Captain Clarke therefore instantly crossed the river with twenty-three men strongly armed, and circling the town, approached it from behind. His unexpected appearance surprised and alarmed the chiefs, who came out to meet him, and

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

648
•721

conducted him to the village. He then told them that having heard of the outrage just committed, he had come to assist his dutiful children; and that if they would assemble their warriors and those of the nation, he would lead them against the Sioux and avenge the blood of their countrymen. After some minutes' conversation, Ohenaw, the Cheyenne arose: 'We now see,' said he, 'that what you have told us is true, since as soon as our enemies threatened to attack us you come to protect us and are ready to chastise those who have spilled our blood. We did indeed listen to your good talk, for when you told us that the other nations were inclined to peace with us, we went out carelessly in small parties, and some have been killed by the Sioux and Ricaras. But I knew that the Ricaras were liars, and I told their chief who accompanied you, that his whole nation were liars and bad men; that we had several times made a peace with them, which they were the first to break; that whenever we pleased we might shoot them like buffalo, but that we had no wish to kill them; that we would not suffer them to kill us, nor steal our horses; and that although we agree to make peace with them, because our two fathers desired it, yet we did not believe that they would be faithful long. Such, father, was my language to them in your presence, and you see that instead of listening to your good counsel they have spilt our blood. A few days ago, two Ricaras came here and told us that two of their villages were making moccasins, that the Sioux were stirring them up against us, and that we ought to take care of our horses; yet these very Ricaras we sent home as soon as the news reached us today, lest our people should kill them in the first moments of grief for their murdered relatives. Four of the Wattasoons whom we expected back in sixteen days have been absent twenty-four, and we fear have fallen. But, father, the snow is now deep, the weather cold, and our horses cannot travel through the plains; the murderers have gone off; if you will conduct us in the spring time, when the snow has disappeared, we will assemble all the surrounding warriors, and follow you.'"

Clarke Counsels Peace. "Captain Clarke replied, that we were always willing and able to defend them; that he was sorry that the snow prevented their marching to meet the Sioux, since he wished to show them that the warriors of their great father would

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

chastise the enemies of his obedient children who opened their ears to his advise; that if some Ricaras had joined the Sioux, they should remember that there were some bad men in every nation, and that they should not be offended at the Ricaras till they saw whether these ill-disposed men were countenanced by the whole tribe; that the Sioux possessed great influence over the Ricaras, whom they supplied with military stores, and sometimes led them estray, because they were afraid to oppose them; but that this should be the less offensive, since the Mandans themselves were under the same apprehensions from the Assiniboines and Kristenaux, and that while they were thus dependent, both the Ricaras and Mandans ought to keep on terms with their powerful neighbors, whom they may afterwards set at defiance, when we shall supply them with arms, and take them under our protection.

"After two hours conversation Captain Clarke left the village. The chief repeatedly thanked him for the fatherly protection he had given them, observing that the whole village had been weeping all night and day for the brave young men who had been slain, but now they would wipe their eyes and weep no more as they saw that their father would protect them. He then crossed the river on the ice and returned on the north side of the fort." (id 184.)

Cheyenne Delegation. "Saturday, December 1st. The wind was from the northwest, and the whole party engaged in picketing the fort. About ten o'clock the half-brother of the man who had been killed, came to inform us that six Sharhas, or Cheyenne Indians, had arrived, bringing a pipe of peace, and that their nation was three days' march behind them. Three Pawnees had accompanied the Sharhas, and the Mandans being afraid of the Sharhas on account of their being at peace with the Sioux, wished to put both them and the three Pawnees to death; but the chiefs had forbidden it, as it would be contrary to our wishes. We gave him a present of tobacco, and although from his connection with the sufferer, he was more embittered against the Pawnees than any other Mandan, yet he seemed perfectly satisfied with our pacific counsels and advise. The Mandans we observed called all the Ricaras by the name of Pawnee; the name of Ricaras being that by which the nation distinguished itself."

"Sunday, December 2nd. At eleven o'clock, the chiefs of the

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

224 the village together, and after discovering a spot convenient for the game, fix their tents; all the family bear their part in the labor, and the game is equally divided among the families of the tribe. When a single hunter returns from the chase with more than is necessary for his own immediate consumption, the neighbors are entitled by custom to a share of it; they do not however ask for it, but send a squaw, who, without saying anything, sits down by the door of the lodge till the master understands the hint, and gives her gratuitously a part for her family." (id 209.)

000 "Monday, 14th. The Mandans continue to pass down the river on their hunting party, and were joined by six of our men. One of those sent on Thursday returned, with information that one of his companions had his feet so badly frost bitten that he could not walk home." (id 210.)

"Wednesday, 16th. About thirty Mandans, among whom six were chiefs, came to see us; the Minnetarees reproached them with their falsehoods, declaring that they were bad men and ought to hide themselves. They had told the Minnetarees that we would kill them if they came to the fort, yet on the contrary they had spent a night there, and been treated with kindness by the whites, who had smoked with them and danced for their amusement.

•721 To the chief Kagahami, who contemplated war against the Snake Indians, this advice was given: "We advised him to reflect seriously before he committed the peace of his nation to the hazards of war: to look back on the numerous nations whom war has destroyed: that if he wished his nation to be happy, he should cultivate peace and intercourse with all his neighbors, by which means they would procure more horses, and increase in numbers; and that if he went to war, he would displease his great father, the president, and forfeit his protection. We added that we had spoken thus to all the tribes whom we had met, that they had all opened their ears, and that the president would compel those who did not voluntarily listen to his advise. Although a young man of only twenty-six years of age, this discourse seemed to strike him. He observed, that if it would be displeasing to us he would not go to war, since he had horses enough and that he would advise all nations to remain at home, until we had

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

seen the Snake Indians, and discovered whether their intentions were pacific." (id 212.) 720

"Friday, February 1st. A cold windy day; our hunters returned having killed only deer. One of the Minnetaree war chiefs, a young man named Maubuksheahokeah or Seeing Snake, came to us, and procured a war hatchet; he also requested that we would suffer him to go to war against the Sioux and Ricaras who had killed a Mandan some time ago; this we refused for reasons which we explained to him. He acknowledged that we were right, and promised to open his ears to our counsels." (id 215.)

Battle-Axe. "Tuesday, 5th. A pleasant fair morning with the wind from the northwest; a number of the Indians came with corn for the blacksmith, who being now provided with coal, has become one of our greatest resources for procuring grain. They seem particularly attached to a battle-axe, of a very inconvenient figure; it is made wholly of iron, the blade extremely thin, and from seven to nine inches long. It is sharp at the point and five or six inches on each side, whence they converge towards the eye, which is circular and about an inch in diameter, the blade itself being not more than a inch wide, the handle is straight, and twelve to fifteen inches long; the whole weighing about a pound. By way of ornament, the blade is perforated with several circular holes. The length of the blade compared with the shortness of the handle, renders it a weapon of very little strength, particularly as it is always used on horseback; there is still, however, another form which is even worse, the same sort of handle being fixed to a blade resembling an espontoon."[6] (id 216.) 411

Sheet-Iron Arrow Points. "Wednesday, February 6th. The morning was fair and pleasant, the wind northwest. A number of Indian chiefs visited us, and withdrew after we had smoked with them, contrary to their customs, for after being once introduced into our apartments, they are fond of lounging about during the remainder of the day. One of the men killed three antelopes. Our blacksmith has his time completely occupied, so great is the demand for utensils of different kinds. The Indians are particularly fond of sheet iron, out of which they form points for arrows and instruments for scraping hides, and when the blacksmith cut up an old cambouse[7] of that metal, we obtained for every piece of four inches square, seven or eight gallons of corn from the Indians, who were delighted at the exchange." (id 216.) 437 [411]

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

mountains and to the Pacific coast on their memorable trip of exploration, and having recrossed the Continental Divide on the return trip in 1806, we find the first journal entry which in any way refers to the Mandans, under date of August 8th of that year, recorded in Vol. 3 of London Ed. of their journal, page 348, as follows:

Skin Canoes. "Friday, 8th. * * They passed over a broken open country, and having reached the Yellowstone, near Pompey's Pillar, they determined to descend the river and for this purpose made two skin canoes,[8] such as they had seen among the Mandans and Ricaras. They are made in the following manner: Two sticks of an inch and a quarter in diameter are tied together so as to form a round hoop, which serves for the brim, while a second hoop, for the bottom of the boat, is made in the same way, and both secured by sticks of the same size from the sides of the hoops, fastened by thongs to the edges of the hoops, and at the interstice of the sticks. Over this frame the skin is drawn closely and tied with thongs, so as to form a perfect basin, seven feet and three inches in diameter, sixteen inches deep, and with sixteen ribs or cross-sticks, and capable of carrying six or eight men with their loads." 'Vol. 3, p. 348)

Mandans at War With Aricaras and Assiniboines. "Monday, 11th. The next morning Captain Clarke set out early, and landed on a sandbar about ten o'clock, for the purpose of taking breakfast and drying the meat. At noon they proceeded on about two miles, when they observed a canoe near the shore. They immediately landed, and were equally surprised and pleased at discovering two men by the names of Dickson and Hancock, who had come from the Illinois on a hunting excursion up the Yellowstone. They had left the Illinois in the summer of 1804 and had spent the last winter with the Tetons, in company with a Mr. Ceautoin, who had come there as a trader, but whom they had robbed, or rather they had taken all his merchandise and given him a few robes in exchange. These men had met the boat which we had dispatched from Fort Mandan, on board of which they were told there was a Ricara chief on his way to Washington, and also another party of Yankton chiefs, accompanied by Mr. Durion on a visit of the same kind. We were sorry to learn that the Mandans and the Minnetarees were at war with the Ricaras, and had killed two of them.

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

The Assiniboines, too, are at war with the Mandans. They have in consequence, prohibited the Northwestern Company from trading to the Missouri, and even killed two of their traders near the Mouse river, and are now lying in wait for Mr. M'Kenzie of the Northwestern Company, who had been for a long time among the Minnetarees. These appearances are rather unfavorable to the project of carrying some of the chiefs to the United States; but we still hope, that by effecting a peace between the Mandans, Minnetarees and Ricaras, the views of our government may be accomplished." (id 350)

"Thursday, 14th.[9] We again set out at sunrise, and at length approached the grand village[10] of the Minnetarees, where the natives had collected to view us as we passed. We fired the blunderbuss several times by way of salute, and soon after landed at the bank, near the village of the Mahahas, or Shoe Indians and were received by a crowd of people, who came to welcome our return."

Re-Arrival at Mandan Villages. "Among these were the principal chief of the Mahahas, and the chief of the Little Minnetaree village, both of whom expressed great pleasure at seeing us again, but the latter wept most bitterly. On inquiry, it appeared that his tears were excited, because the sight of us reminded him of his son who had been lately killed by the Blackfoot Indians. After remaining there a few minutes, we crossed to the Mandan village of the Black Cat, where all the inhabitants seemed very much pleased at seeing us. We immediately sent Chaboneau with an invitation for the Minnetarees to visit us, and dispatched Drewyer to the lower village of the Mandans to bring Jesseaume as an interpreter."

Black Cat. "Captain Clarke in the meantime walked up to the village of the Black Cat, and smoked and ate with the chief. This village has been rebuilt since our departure, and was now much smaller; a quarrel having arisen among the Indians, in consequence of which a number of families had removed to the opposite side of the river. On the arrival of Jesseaume, Captain Clarke addressed the chiefs. We spoke to them now, he said, in the same language we had done before; and then repeated his invitation to accompany him to the United States, to hear in person the counsels of their great father, who can at all times protect those who open their ears to his counsels, and punish his enemies. The

1: DeLand O-4 (No date) 1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

of the Sioux to venture with us. Captain Clarke then spoke to the chiefs and warriors of the village. He told them of his anxiety that some of them should see their great father, and hear his good words and receive his gifts, and requested them to fix on some confidential chief who might accompany us. To this they made the same objections as before, till at length a young man offered to go, and the warriors all assented to it. But the character of his man was known to be bad, and one of the party with Captain Clarke informed him that at that moment he had in his possession a knife which he had stolen. Captain Clarke therefore told the chief of this theft, and ordered the knife to be given up. This was done with a poor apology for having it in his possession, and Captain Clarke then reproached the chiefs for wishing to send such a fellow to see and hear so distinguished a person as their great father. They all hung down their heads for some time, till the Black Cat apologized by saying that the danger was such that they were afraid of sending any of their chiefs, as they considered his loss almost inevitable. Captain Clarke remained some time with them, smoking and relating various particulars of his journey, and then left them to visit the second chief of the Mandans (or the Blackcrow) who had expressed some disposition to accompany us. He seemed well inclined to the journey, but was unwilling to decide till he had called a council of his people, which he intended to do in the afternoon. On returning to the camp, he found the chief of the Mahahas, and also the chief of the Little Minnetaree village, who brought a present of corn on their mules, of which they possess several, and which they procure from the Crow Indians, who either buy or steal them on the frontiers of the Spanish settlements. A great number of the Indians visited us for the purpose of renewing their acquaintance, or of exchanging robes or other articles for the skins brought by the men." (id 354)

Mandan Wars. "In the evening Chaboneau, who has been mingling with the Indians, and had learned what had taken place during their absence, informed us that as soon as we had left the Minnetarees, they sent out a war party against the Shoshonees, whom they attacked and routed, though in the engagement they lost two men, one of whom was the son of the chief of the Little Minnetaree village. Another war party had gone against

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

•721 the Ricaras, two of whom they killed. A misunderstanding, too, had taken place between the Mandans and the Minnetarees, in consequence of a dispute about a woman, which had nearly occasioned a war, but at length a pipe was presented by the Minnetarees, and a reconciliation took place."

648 721 **Corn Abundant—Counseled Against Wars.** "Friday, 15th. The Mandans had offered to give us some corn, and on sending this morning, we found a greater quantity collected for our use than all our canoes would contain. We therefore thanked the chief and took only six loads. At ten o'clock the chiefs of the different villages came down to smoke with us. We therefore took this opportunity of endeavoring to engage the Borgne in our interests by a present of the swivel, which is no longer serviceable, as it cannot be discharged from our largest perioque. It was now loaded, and the chiefs being formed in a circle around it, Captain Clarke addressed them with great ceremony. He said that he had listened with much attention to what had yesterday been declared by the Borgne, whom he believed to be sincere, and then reproached them with their disregard of our counsels, and their wars on the Shoshonees and Ricaras. Little Cherry, the old Minnetaree chief, answered that they had long stayed at home and listened to our advice, but at last went to war against the Sioux, because their horses had been stolen, and their companions killed, and in an expedition against those people, they had met the Ricaras, who were on their way to strike them, and a battle ensued. But in future, he said, they would attend to our words and live in peace. But Borgne added that his ears, too, would always be open to the words of his good father, and shut against bad counsel. Captain Clarke then presented to the Borgne the swivel, which we told him had announced the words of his great father to all the nations we had seen, and which, whenever it was fired, should recall those which we had delivered to him. The gun was then discharged, and the Borgne had it conveyed in great pomp to his village. The counsel then adjourned."

000 **Big White Taken Past.** "In the afternoon, Captain Clarke walked up to the village of the Littlecrow, taking a flag, which he intended to present to him, but was surprised on being told by him that he had given over all intentions of accompanying us, and refused the flag. He found that this was occasioned by a

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

000 another glass of whiskey and at night Captain Clarke and part of the men returned from the village, the rest remained all night.

"Wednesday, 2nd. This day I discovered how the Indians keep their horses during the winter. In the day time they are permitted to run out and gather what they can, and at night are brought into the lodges, with the natives themselves, and fed upon cottonwood branches, and in this way are kept in tolerable ease. (p. 66.)

189 "Sunday, 20th. I went up with one of the men to the villages. They treated us friendly and gave us victuals. After we were done eating they presented a bowlful to a buffalo head, saying "**eat that.**" Their superstitious credulity is so great that they believe by using the head well the living buffalo will come and that they will get a supply of meat. (p. 68)

Sioux Hostilities. "Thursday, 28th. Sixteen of us went up ●721 the river about six miles, where we found and cut down trees for four canoes. While we were absent an express arrived from the Rickarees village with news that the Sioux had declared war against us, and also the Mandans and Gros Ventres. They had boasted of the robbery of the 14th, at the Rickarees village in their way home, and that they intended to massacre the whole of us in the spring. By this express we therefore found out that it was the Sioux who had taken the horses from our men. (p. 70)

000 "Saturday, 6th. The day was clear and pleasant. This day we heard that some of the Rickarees had come up to the Mandan villages. Our interpreter and some of the men were sent over to ascertain the truth of the report and we were detained all day waiting their return. (p. 72)

Ricara Delegation. "Sunday, 7th. The men returned and four of the Rickarees with them. The commanding officers held a conversation with these Indians and they concluded that some of them would go down in the boat from their village to St. Louis. About five o'clock in the afternoon we left Fort Mandan in good spirits. Thirty-one men and a woman went up the river and thirteen returned down it in the boat. We had two perioques and six canoes and proceeded about four miles and encamped opposite the first Mandan village on the north side.

Departure From Mandan Villages. "Monday, 8th. At 12 the word was passed from a canoe in the rear that it was sinking,

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

323 the whites came among them; and that when they saw the bril-
301 liantly colored beads of the traders, they conceived the idea of improving their art by using these beads. If they ever possessed the art of making glass de novo, there is no record, tradition, or other evidence of it, that I have been able to find."

Was It Ancient Art. "One of many reasons, though perhaps an insufficient reason, for believing the art to be of no recent origin among them, is that they used the triangular pendants, not as ornaments only, but as evidences of betrothal, as long ago as
[584] the oldest men can remember. When a girl was promised in marriage in her infancy by her parents, as was not infrequently done, one of these pendants was tied to her forelock so as to hang down over her forehead. When the promise was fulfilled, the husband removed the pendant and threw it away." (p. 22-23.)

439 **Inter-Tribal Trade.** "With the nomadic tribes around, they exchanged their agricultural produce for horses, and, recently,
[824] for robes. When the Dakotas saw a certain flower (Liatris punctata) blooming on the prairie, they knew that the corn was ripe, and went to the villages of the farming Indians to trade. From
●721 the time they came in sight of the village to the time they disappeared there was a truce. When they had passed beyond the bluffs, they might steal an unguarded pony or lift a scalp, and were in turn liable to be attacked." (p. 27.)

439 **Trade With Pacific Coast—Shells.** "It appears probable that they once carried on trade indirectly with the tribes of the Pacific coast, for they had Dentalium shells similar to those obtained on the Pacific and they prized them so highly that the white traders found it advisable to obtain them for the trade. As late as 1866, ten of these shells, of inferior size, costing the traders only a cent a piece, would buy a superior buffalo robe, and formerly only two or three of the same quality were paid for a robe. Modern traders, with whom the writer had conversed, obtained their shells from eastern importers, and know nothing of the original source of supply. They supposed them to come from the Atlantic coast or the Great Lakes, and called them 'Iroquois shells,' which is probably their corruption of the Chinook 'hyakwa;' but it is possible the reverse is the case.

439 "They also used, and still use, as ornaments, fragments of the
301 **Abalone** shells (one or more species of **Haliotis**) of the Pacific.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

others' directions. As the leader of his first war expedition, he was expected to name others with a distinguished war record to serve with him as co-leaders. They would share his rewards and assume their share of the responsibilities. His word was authority in all matters relating to his war expeditions, and, whereas in the past he had accepted the decisions of his leader in disputes appertaining to rewards for striking the enemy or capturing and dividing the spoils, he demanded similar obedience from his group.

The Mandan had a highly formalized method of recording war honors, and it was the duty of the war leader to verify their authenticity. He would relate the exploits of his men during social occasions and ceremonies. Those holding war honors were entitled to express them by means of particular decorations. Of these decorations, the Mandan claim that the practice of wearing eagle feathers was of recent origin and was borrowed from the Sioux.

The highest honor was accorded to a man who went out alone and found an enemy whom he killed and scalped. He was authorized to paint one legging black and the other either yellow or white and to paint each half of his shirt in the same manner. He was also permitted to wear a coyote tail at each ankle signifying that he saw an enemy first and afterward "struck" him. He could also wear one eagle feather in his hair and was the recipient of much honor during the scalp dances as long as he lived. The most common motive for going out alone was to revenge a relative, particularly a sibling, when the slayer was known. In such cases, announcement was made in advance that he was leaving on a particular day to find his relative's slayer. Catlin records such an expedition by Four Bears, who went into the Arikara villages near the Grand River at night to avenge the death of his brother.[2] The old Mandan still related this incident in 1930, when the information for this report was collected. The only instance of one man going far from the village and killing one or more persons remembered as occurring during the lifetime of my informants was for revenge. A distinguished war leader's wife ran away with another dis-

2. George Catlin, *The Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians* (London, 1841), pp. 239–40.

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

tinguished man between whom there had been considerable rivalry, and he was very angry because he had pledged to give certain ceremonies and needed his wife's help to prepare the robes and food. He knew that his rival's relatives were laughing about it, for the wife's people were said to be selfish and wanted their daughter to marry a more distinguished man. If he took his wife back, he would lose face and would be laughed at during the dances when the men related their deeds of bravery. On the other hand, he could not go through the ceremony without a wife's assistance. He could have called her back to his lodge to have her painted and dressed beautifully and returned to her new husband on the best horse he could find. This would have been considered an honorable act. Instead he disappeared during the night when none would see him leaving and walked toward the Mouse River to get horses and scalps to be used in shaming his rival.

He left in the middle of the winter during the coldest part of the year and suffered a great deal from the cold while crossing the divide which separates the Missouri and Mouse rivers. Looking down from the high hills into the valley, he found a camp of Assiniboine and observed that the lodges were not closely assembled, since war parties rarely went out during the coldest part of the winter. He singled out an isolated lodge having only two occupants, a young man and his wife, and observed where their horses were taken for the night. After dark he went into the camp and selected a horse to ride back to his winter village and hid it in a suitable spot where he could reach it quickly when it was needed. When the camp was quiet, he went into the lodge, killing and scalping the young man. He did not kill the woman out of respect to his own motherless children, which fact he intended to mention when insulting his own wife after he returned.

Taking the scalp as proof of his success and riding the horse, he reached his home in two days. He rested one day during which time preparations were made for the Scalp Dance. On the second day he sent for his wife, who was obliged to come. He washed her face, dressed her in the best clothing he could find, and placed her on the horse. She cried from shame. During the Scalp Dance she was sent on horseback from the lodge to

2: Bower's E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

554 578 721 837

return to her new husband's lodge. A family having two eligible daughters invited him in to marry them. He then had help to perform the ceremonies he had pledged. Having killed an enemy when out alone far from home, he became a man of unusual distinction and was respected in council.

554 703

When several went out and found one enemy who was killed far from home, the first to strike him painted one side of his shirt and legging black and wore one coyote tail; the second painted the shirt and leggings in the same manner and wore the coyote tail but added a red stripe to the eagle feather. The third and fourth painted only the legging black, the third one painting two stripes on the eagle feather, and the fourth painting three stripes.

There were also distinctive markings to indicate those who had struck a single enemy on different expeditions. A person striking a lone enemy could paint or decorate two ×'s on the legging, one above the knee and the other below the knee, or he could put them on the sleeve of the shirt. For the second enemy found alone and struck, he added two ×'s to either the other legging or the shirt. Crosses on both sleeves of the shirt and both leggings indicated that he had struck a lone enemy on four different war expeditions when far from the village. The Mandan interpreted "far from the village" as meaning beyond the usual hunting territory.

A coyote tail worn on the ankle signified that the wearer had struck one enemy far from home; two coyote tails signified that he had struck an enemy on two occasions or had killed and struck one enemy when out alone and far from home. When feathers of the crow or raven were attached to the coyote tail, it signified that he was also first to see the enemy.

The leader or Old Wolf was entitled to carry a scalp stick to which was attached a portion of a scalp for each scalp taken while serving as leader. He was also authorized to wear scalps on his shirt; for the first scalp, he would wear one piece on one sleeve; for the second scalp he would wear pieces on both sleeves. He wore a piece of scalp on each sleeve of the shirt and each leg of the leggings for four enemies killed on four different expeditions. He did not, however, wear feathers in his hair, paint his leggings, or wear the coyote tails unless he struck an enemy while serving as leader.

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

the pit where it was dispatched and the hunter waited for another. This method was also used by the Hidatsa, and so in fact nearly all the Mandan hunting methods and customs were duplicated among their neighbors. The only important exception was the Mandan custom of giving a share of the meat to anyone who might come to the home of a successful hunter and ask for it. Henry tells us that the Hidatsa and Amahami did not have this charitable custom.

WAR:— Among most of the Indians, war was the chief occupation of the men, and the Mandans in this respect differed little from the other tribes. They were constantly in danger from their more numerous enemies, the Dakotas, and in addition frequently had disputes with other smaller bands. The Mandans were not a warlike people, and fought only when necessary; but when the time came they were among the bravest and most fearless warriors of the region. Maximilian says that they had been known to send war parties as far as the Rocky Mountains against the Blackfeet and as far east as the Red River against the Ojibwa. Their chief enemies were, however, the Dakota, the Cheyenne, and at times the Arikara. The custom of sending out war parties was not as usual here as among their neighbors, the Hidatsa. The system of rank in the village was to a considerable extent based upon military prowess; the wearing of different insignia which indicated each man's deeds was a common device. Those who had made a coup wore a wolf's tail at the heel of their moccasin. If a man was the first of a party to touch and kill an enemy, he painted a spiral line about his arm, with another winding in the opposite direction with three cross stripes. For the second enemy he painted his left legging a reddish brown. If he killed an enemy in equal fight before any other enemy was slain, he could put a wolf's tail around each foot. For the third coup two lengthwise stripes with three cross stripes were painted on the arm, this was the most honorable coup and no other distinctive marks were in use, except that another eagle feather might be worn in the hair for each additional coup. If a man made his coup after others were made, the end of the wolf's tail was cut off. Six little wooden sticks worn in the hair showed that a man

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

had been shot six times; some wore a wooden knife, a sign they had killed an enemy with a knife. Maximilian describes one man, a chief, whose face was painted half yellow and half red, with stripes made by rubbing the color off; his arms had seventeen lines showing the number of his deeds, and on his breast, in yellow, was a hand showing that he had made prisoners.

When a youth first wished to lead a war party he at once acquired a medicine. Then he solicited his young men friends by presents and assurances of the efficacy of his medicine and after feasts and dances he departed with as many followers as he could get. In the large war parties there were four real leaders and sometimes three others called bad leaders. Each real leader carried a medicine pipe in a case on his back. To become a chief it was necessary to begin as a war party leader, then to kill a man while in a party where the candidate was not a leader. Again, while following another leader, he must be the first to discover the enemy and kill one of them, and lastly he must have owned at some time a white buffalo hide. Each warrior carried about his neck the whistle of his band, and at the moment of falling upon the enemy these were blown and the war-cry was sounded.

The Mandans seldom took male prisoners but even when taken they were never tortured. As soon as a prisoner had entered the village and eaten corn he was considered as one of the nation; the women, however, could go out and meet the returning party and kill the prisoners then. Scalps were dried and used in decoration. When a successful war party returned they were met by the women and children who entered the village with them dancing the scalp dance. The warriors painted the face, and often the whole body, black, and the scalp dance was danced in the medicine lodge four nights, then later in the middle of the village. If no Mandan was killed in the campaign, the dance was kept up for six months.

In all these war customs we find nothing more than the general plains ideas such as were found in all the Sioux tribes and among most of their neighbors.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

one of their villages on the other side of Knife River, which frequently occasioned dissension between them, and it is only within these fourteen years that permanent peace and concord have existed between the two people.

At the time when our narrator was a young man, the Arikkaras were near and dangerous enemies to the Mandans. They often fought with them as well as with the Sioux. When one of the two allied nations fought alone, it was almost always defeated, but when they were combined they generally triumphed. The preceding long narrative throws, as I have said, much light on the actual condition of this people, and of their prevalent superstitious customs.

At the time of their first alliance with the Manitaries, the Mandans are said to have inhabited eight or nine villages on the two banks of the Missouri, on the Heart River, and higher upwards. Subsequently a great number of the Mandans were carried off by the small-pox, and their enemies, the Sioux, entirely destroyed their largest village, and massacred the inhabitants. The remaining population then collected in the two villages that still exist—Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush and Ruhptare. Plate XVI. is a view of Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, of which a ground plan will be found at the end of this chapter. Previously to the devastations of the small-pox, the Sioux were not very dangerous enemies to the Mandans, because they lived at too great a distance from them, but the Chayennes and the Arikkaras were their natural adversaries. I shall now proceed to treat of the religious and superstitious practices which still prevail among them.

These Indians are full of prejudice and superstition, and connect all the natural phenomena with the before-mentioned silly creations of their own imaginations. They undertake nothing without first invoking their guardian spirit, or medicine, who mostly appears to them in a dream. When they wish to choose their medicine or guardian spirit, they fast for three or four days, and even longer, retire to a solitary spot, do penance, and even sacrifice joints of their fingers; howl and cry to the lord of life, or to the first man, beseeching him to point out their guardian spirit. They continue in this excited state till they dream, and the first animal or other object which appears to them is chosen for their guardian spirit or medicine. Every man has his guardian spirit. There is, in the prairie, a large hill where they remain motionless many days, lamenting and fasting; not far from this hill is a cave, into which they creep at night. The choice and adoration of their medicine are said to have been taught them by the strange man or spirit who appeared in their villages many years ago, and has not since been seen, and of whom mention has already been made by the name of Ochkih-Hadda. He is said also to have taught them the art of tattooing, and to have instituted their medicine feasts. In all natural phenomena, which are not of daily occurrence, they see wonders, and indications of favourable or unfavourable events. If the falling stars are numerous, or in a certain direction, it is to them an indication of war, or of a great mortality in the human race. They were not willing to have their portraits painted, because they alleged that they should soon die if their portraits came into other hands; at least they endeavoured to obtain the portrait of the painter as an antidote.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

224 The wolf and the fox are sometimes shot with a gun, as well as the white hare, in the winter time, or they are caught in traps. They set for the wolves very strong traps. The prairie wolf is not easily caught, being very cautious. Foxes are caught in small traps, which are covered with brushwood and buffaloes' skulls, to conceal them. Many such traps are seen everywhere in the prairies, which are surrounded with small stakes, that the animals may not enter them sideways. Beavers are now caught, in great numbers, in iron traps, which they procure from the Whites. Small animals, such as the ermine, are caught with horsehair springes, set before their burrows. The manner in which birds of prey are caught is said to be very remarkable. 223 The birdcatcher lies down at full length in a narrow pit made on purpose, and exactly large enough to hold him. As soon as he has lain down, the pit is covered with brushwood and hay, pieces of meat are laid upon it, and a crow, or some such bird, fastened to it. The eagle, or other bird of prey, is said to descend, and to sit down, in order to eat, on which the birdcatcher seizes it by the legs. I would not believe this had not men worthy of credit given me their word for it. In this manner they catch the eagle, called, by the English, the war-eagle, and the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), the Quiliou, or *oiseau de medicine*, of the Canadians, which I was not so fortunate as to meet with, and which they highly value, as I have already stated.

●721 Next to the chase, war is the chief employment of the Indians, and military glory the highest object of their ambition. It is well known that Indian bravery is very different from that of the Whites; for wilfully to expose themselves to the enemy's fire would, in their eyes, not be bravery, but folly. Cunning and stratagem give them the advantage over the enemy; their strength lies in concealing their march, and surprises at daybreak. He who kills many enemies without sustaining any loss is the best warrior.

721 When a young man desires to establish his reputation in the field, he fasts for four or seven days, as long as his strength permits him, goes alone to the hills, complains and cries to 787 the lord of life, calls incessantly to the higher powers for their aid, and only goes home, sometimes, in the evening, to sleep. 555 A dream suggests his medicine to him. If the lord of life makes him dream of a piece of cherry-tree wood, or of an animal, it is a good omen. The young men who take the field with him have then confidence in his medicine. If he can perform an exploit his reputation is established. But whatever exploits he may perform, he acquires no respect if he does not make valuable presents; and they say of him, "He has indeed performed many exploits, but yet he is as much to be pitied as those whom he has killed." A man may have performed many exploits, and yet not be allowed to wear tufts of hair on his clothes, unless he carries a medicine pipe, and has been the leader of a war party. When a young man, who has never performed an exploit, is the first to kill an enemy on a warlike expedition, he 721 paints a spiral line round his arm, of whatever colour he pleases, and he may then wear a 555 whole wolf's tail at the ankle or heel of one foot. If he has first killed and touched the

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

enemy he paints a line running obliquely round the arm, and another crossing it in the opposite direction, with three transverse stripes. On killing the second enemy he paints his left leg (that is, the leggin) of a reddish-brown. If he kills the second enemy before another is killed by his comrades, he may wear two entire wolves' tails at his heels. On his third exploit he paints two longitudinal stripes on his arms, and three transverse stripes. This is the exploit that is esteemed the highest; after the third exploit no more marks are made. If he kills an enemy after others of the party have done the same, he may wear on his heel one wolf's tail, the tip of which is cut off. In every numerous war party there are four leaders (partisans, karokkanakah), sometimes seven, but only four are reckoned as the real partisans; the others are called bad partisans (karokkanakah-chakohosch, literally, *partisans galeux*). All partisans carry on their backs a medicine pipe in a case, which other warriors dare not have. To become a chief (Numakschi) a man must have been a partisan, and then kill an enemy when he is not a partisan. If he follows another partisan for the second time, he must have first discovered the enemy, have killed one, and then possessed the hide of a white buffalo cow complete, with the horns, to pretend to the title of chief (Numakschi). Dipauch, who related these particulars, had himself done all these, and was an eminent man among his people, but had never assumed that title. He had given five horses for his white buffalo hide. All the warriors wear small war pipes round their necks, which are often very elegantly ornamented with porcupine quills (Plate XXI. Fig. 9, and Plate XLVIII. Fig. 14).

As soon as they advance to attack the enemy every one sounds his pipe, and all together utter the war whoop, a shrill cry, which they render tremulous by repeatedly and suddenly striking the mouth with the hand. Those who fast and dream, in order to perform an exploit, are entitled to wear a wolf's skin. A warrior has a right to wear as many eagle's feathers as he has performed exploits. All Indians, on their military expeditions, erect, in the evening, a sort of fort, in which they are, in some measure, secure against a sudden attack. In Major Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains, it is stated, that they often make *caches* (hiding-places) in these forts; but we did not observe any such on the Missouri. The Indians, on their expeditions, always set a watch by night as soon as they are near the enemy, and often send out scouts to considerable distances. At such a post the Indians are very vigilant and active; after an engagement they do not bury the dead, but, if they have not time to carry them away, leave them on the spot where they fell. The scalps, called, by the Canadians, *les chevelures*, are often preserved for a long time stretched upon small hoops, and the hair is afterwards used as an ornament to the dress of the men. The skin of the scalp is generally painted red. The Mandans, Manitaries, and Crows, never torture their prisoners like the Pawnees and the eastern nations. When a prisoner has arrived at the village, and eaten maize, he is considered as one of their own nation, and no person ever thinks of molesting him. Often, however, the women hasten out to meet

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

721 the prisoners ere they can reach the village, and kill them; this is especially an act of revenge for
727 their husbands or sons who may have fallen in the battle.

721 When a young man desires to become a leader, or partisan, he first gains, by gifts, the favour
555 of the other young men, and then dedicates a medicine pipe, which is a plain, unornamented tube. This ceremony is accomplished by a four days' fast, and supplications for assistance to the lord of life, the first man, &c. &c., and other supernatural beings. He then addresses the young men, and calls upon them to give him their support in his undertakings. If a sufficient number testify their readiness to accompany him in a warlike expedition, and such an expedition is determined upon, they dance and feast in the medicine lodge for several successive nights, from whence, too, they generally march off by night. The women never accompany these expeditions. On setting out the men are badly clothed, and not painted. They do not depart in a body, but, for the most part, singly, or in small detatched parties. At a certain distance from the village they halt upon an isolated hill, open their medicine bags, and, after the men have sat down in a
[787] circle, the partisan produces his medicine pipe, which all present smoke; the person who smokes last, then spreads his medicines on the ground, or hangs them up, and from them foretels the fate of the expedition. The Indians manifest much gravity and decorum on solemn occasions like these.

727 When the warriors return from their expedition, the scalps are carried on in advance, on
535 high poles: if they have performed any exploits, they paint their faces black; very frequently the whole body is thus disfigured. The women and children go out to meet them, and they enter the village performing the scalp dance. This dance is then repeated four successive nights in the medicine lodge, and is subsequently danced in the open space, in the centre of the village. If the campaign took place in the spring, it is danced, at intervals, till the fall of the leaf in autumn; if in the autumn, it is danced till spring, but should any of the nation be killed in the interim all festivities immediately cease. In the scalp dance the Indians paint themselves in various ways, form a semicircle, advance, and retreat amid the din of singing, the beating of the drum and schischikué. The wives of those men who have obtained the scalps carry them on long rods.

555 All the distinguished deeds performed by a war party are placed to the account of the partisan. All the scalps that are taken belong to him, and also the horses that they have captured. He who has killed an enemy is a brave man, and reckons one exploit; but the partisan rises the highest on that account, even though he had not seen any of the enemies who have been slain. When he returns home, the old men and women meet, and sing the scalp song, on which he must make them all presents of value. He gives away all the captured horses, and valuable articles, and is afterwards a poor man, but his reputation is great. Successful partisans afterwards become chiefs, and are highly respected by their nation. The Indian youths go to war when they are only fourteen or fifteen years of age. Sometimes they make excursions on horseback in the winter.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

The Mandans and Manitaries make excursions as far as the Rocky Mountains, against their enemies, the Blackfeet, and against the Chippeways, to the country of Pembina. Their other enemies are the Sioux, the Arikkaras, the Assiniboins, and the Chayennes (spelt, by the English, Shiennes). They are at peace with the Crows. 721

The weapons of the Mandans and Manitaries are, first, the bow and arrow. The bows are made of elm or ash, there being no other suitable kinds of wood in their country. In form and size they resemble those of the other nations; the string is made of the sinews of animals twisted. They are frequently ornamented. A piece of red cloth, four or five inches long, is wound round each end of the bow, and adorned with glass beads, dyed porcupine quills, and stripe of white ermine. A tuft of horsehair, dyed yellow, is usually fastened to one end of the bow. Pehriska-Ruhpa, in Plate XXIII., has such a weapon in his hand. The quiver, to which the bow-case is fastened, is made of panther or buffalo skin; in the first case, with the hair outwards, the long tail hanging down, and, as among the Blackfeet, lined with red cloth, and embroidered in various figures with white beads. Their handsome quivers are made of otter skin, which are much esteemed. A very beautifully ornamented one, belonging to the Crows, is represented in Plate XLVIII. Fig. 16. Narrow strips of skin hang down at both ends of the quiver. The arrows of the Mandans and Manitaries are neatly made; the best wood is said to be that of the service berry (*Amelanchier sanguinea*). The arrows of all the Missouri nations are much alike,* with long, triangular, very sharp, iron heads, which they themselves make out of old iron: it is but slightly glued to the shaft of the arrow, which is rather short, and generally remains in the body of the wounded animal. They know nothing of poisoning their arrows. The arrow-heads were formerly made of sharp stones: when Charbonneau first came to the Missouri, some made of flint were in use, and in the villages they are still met with, and in all those parts of the United States where the expelled or extirpated aborigines formerly dwelt. We were told that, in the prairie, near the Manitari villages, there is a sand hill, where the wind has uncovered a great number of such stone arrow-heads. Almost all the Mandans and Manitaries now have guns, which they ornament with bits of red cloth, on the brass rings of the ramrod, and at the but-end 411 [824]

* Though all their arrows appear, at first sight, to be perfectly alike, there is a great difference in the manner in which they are made. Of all the tribes of the Missouri the Mandans are said to make the neatest and most solid arrows. The iron heads are thick and solid, the feathers glued on, and the part just below the head, and the lower end, are wound round with very even, extremely thin sinews of animals. They all have, in their whole length, a spiral line, either curved or painted red, which is to represent the lightning. The Manitaries make the iron heads thinner, and not so well. They do not glue on the feathers, but only tie them on at both ends, like the Brasilians. The Assiniboins frequently have very thin and indifferent heads to their arrows, made of iron-plate. Mr. Say (Major Long's Expedition) says, that the straw-wood (silicaria) is used for their arrows by the Indians on the Lower Missouri and the neighbouring prairies. I conjecture that this shrub is the shrier (*Ostotegus turminalis*) of the Upper Missouri, which is sometimes used for bows, but very seldom for arrows. [824]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

000 their conquests, not with the bow or the javelin, but with their small black eyes, which shoot out from under their unfledged brows, and pierce the boldest, fiercest chieftain to the heart.

181 The Mandans are certainly a very interesting and pleasing people in their personal appearance and manners; differing in many respects, both in 721 looks and customs, from all other tribes which I have seen. They are not a warlike people; for they seldom, if ever, carry war into their enemies' country; but when invaded, shew their valour and courage to be equal to that of any people on earth. Being a small tribe, and unable to contend on the wide prairies with the Sioux and other roaming tribes, who are ten times more numerous; they have very judiciously located themselves in a permanent village, which is strongly fortified, and ensures their preservation. 181 By this means they have advanced further in the arts of manufacture; have supplied their lodges more abundantly with the comforts, and even luxuries of life, than any Indian nation I know of. The consequence of this is, that this tribe have taken many steps ahead of other tribes in manners and refinements (if I may be allowed to apply the word refinement to Indian life); and are therefore familiarly (and correctly) denominated, by the Traders and others, who have been amongst them, "the polite and friendly Mandans."

There is certainly great justice in the remark; and so forcibly have I been struck with the peculiar ease and elegance of these people, together with the diversity of complexions, the various colours of their hair and eyes; the singularity of their language, and their peculiar and unaccountable customs, that I am fully convinced that they have sprung from some other origin than that of the other North American tribes, or that they are an amalgam of natives with some civilized race.

Here arises a question of very great interest and importance for discussion; and, after further familiarity with their character, customs, and traditions, if I forget it not, I will eventually give it further consideration. Suffice it then, for the present, that their *personal appearance* alone, independant of their modes and customs, pronounces them at once, as more or less, than savage.

142 A stranger in the Mandan village is first struck with the different shades of complexion, and various colours of hair which he sees in a crowd about him; and is at once almost disposed to exclaim that "these are not Indians."

There are a great many of these people whose complexions appear as light as half breeds; and amongst the women particularly, there are many whose skins are almost white, with the most pleasing symmetry and proportion of features; with hazel, with grey, and with blue eyes,—with mildness and sweetness of expression, and excessive modesty of demeanour, which render them exceedingly pleasing and beautiful.

Why this diversity of complexion I cannot tell, nor can they themselves

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

224 boasting, whilst bows were twanging and spears were polishing by running their blades into the ground—every face and every eye was filled with joy and gladness—horses were pawing and snuffing in fury for the outset, when Louison Frénié, an interpreter of the Fur Company, galloped through the village with his rifle in his hand and his powder-horn at his side; his head and waist were bandaged with handkerchiefs, and his shirt sleeves rolled up to his shoulders—the hunter's yell issued from his lips and was repeated through the village; he flew to the bluffs, and behind him and over the graceful swells of the prairie, galloped the emulous youths, whose hearts were beating high and quick for the onset.

261 In the village, where hunger had reigned, and starvation was almost ready to look them in the face, all was instantly turned to joy and gladness. The chiefs and doctors who had been for some days dealing out minimum rations to the community from the public crib, now spread before their subjects the contents of their own private *caches*, and the last of every thing that could be mustered, that they might eat a thanksgiving to the Great Spirit for his goodness in sending them a supply of buffalo meat. A general carouse of banqueting ensued, which occupied the greater part of the day; and their hidden stores which might have fed an emergency for several weeks, were pretty nearly used up on the occasion—bones were half picked, and dishes half emptied and then handed to the dogs. *I* was not forgotten neither, in the general surfeit; several large and generous wooden bowls of pemican and other palatable food were sent to my painting-room, and I received them in this time of scarcity with great pleasure.

721 After this general indulgence was over, and the dogs had licked the dishes, their usual games and amusements ensued—and hilarity and mirth, and joy took possession of, and reigned in, every nook and corner of the village; and in the midst of this, screams and shrieks were heard! and echoed everywhere. Women and children scrambled to the tops of their wigwams, with their eyes and their hands stretched in agonizing earnestness to the prairie, whilst blackened warriors ran furiously through every winding maze of the village, and issuing their jarring gutturals of vengeance, as they snatched their deadly weapons from their lodges, and struck the reddened post as they furiously passed it by! Two of their hunters were bending their course down the sides of the bluff towards the village, and another broke suddenly out of a deep ravine, and yet another was seen dashing over and down the green hills, and all were goading on their horses at full speed! and then came another, and another, and all entered the village amid shouts and groans of the villagers who crowded around them; the story was told in their looks, for one was bleeding, and the blood that flowed from his naked breast had crimsoned his milk white steed as it had dripped over him; another grasped in his left hand a scalp that was reeking in blood—and in the other his whip—another grasped nothing, save the reins in one hand and the mane of the horse in the other, having thrown his bow and his arrows

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

• 72 away, and trusted to the fleetness of his horse for his safety; yet the story was audibly told, and the fatal tragedy recited in irregular and almost suffocating ejaculations—the names of the dead were in turns pronounced and screams and shrieks burst forth at their recital—murmurs and groans ran through the village, and this happy little community were in a moment smitten with sorrow and distraction.

Their proud band of hunters who had started full of glee and mirth in the morning, had been surrounded by their enemy, the Sioux, and eight of them killed. The Sioux, who had probably reconnoitred their village during the night, and ascertained that they were dancing for buffaloes, laid a stratagem to entrap them in the following manner:—Some six or eight of them appeared the next morning (on a distant bluff, in sight of their sentinel) under the skins of buffaloes, imitating the movements of those animals whilst grazing; and being discovered by the sentinel, the intelligence was telegraphed to the village, which brought out their hunters as I have described. The masked buffaloes were seen grazing on the top of a high bluff, and when the hunters had approached within half a mile or so of them, they suddenly disappeared over the hill. Louison Frénié, who was leading the little band of hunters, became at that moment suspicious of so strange a movement, and came to a halt * * *

* "Look"! (said a Mandan, pointing to a little ravine to the right, and at the foot of the hill, from which suddenly broke some forty or fifty furious Sioux, on fleet horses and under full whip, who were rushing upon them); they wheeled, and in front of them came another band more furious from the other side of the hill! they started for home (poor fellows), and strained every nerve; but the Sioux were too fleet for them; and every now and then, the whizzing arrow and the lance were herd to rip the flesh of their naked backs, and a grunt and a groan, as they tumbled from their horses. Several miles were run in this desperate race; and Frénié got home, and several of the Mandans, though eight of them were killed and scalped by the way.

So ended that day and the hunt; but many a day and sad, will last the grief of those whose hearts were broken on that unlucky occasion.

This day, though, my readers, has been one of a more joyful kind, for the Great Spirit, who was indignant at so flagrant an injustice, has sent the Mandans an abundance of buffaloes; and all hearts have joined in a general thanksgiving to Him for his goodness and justice.

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

159 that elevate him conspicuous above all of his nation. There is no man amongst the Mandans so generally loved, nor any one who wears a robe so justly famed and honourable as that of Mah-to-toh-pa.

I said his robe was of the skin of a young buffalo bull, and that the battles of his life were emblazoned on it; and on a former occasion, that he presented me a beautiful robe, containing all the battles of his life, which he had spent two weeks' time in copying from his original one, which he wore on his shoulders.

This robe, with his tracings on it, is the chart of his military life; and when explained, will tell more of Mah-to-toh-pa.

Some days after this robe was presented, he called upon me with Mr. Kipp, the trader and interpreter for the Mandans, and gave me of each battle there pourtrayed the following history, which was interpreted by Mr. Kipp, from his own lips, and written down by me, as we three sat upon the robe. Mr. Kipp, who is a gentleman of respectability and truth; and who has lived with these people ten years, assured me, that nearly every one of these narrations were of events that had happened whilst he had lived with them, and had been familiarly known to him; and that every word that he asserted was true

And again, reader, in this country where, of all countries I ever was in, men are the most jealous of rank and of standing; and in a community so small also, that every man's deeds of honour and chivalry are familiarly known to all; it would not be reputable, or even safe to life, for a warrior to wear upon his back the representations of battles he never had fought; professing to have done what every child in the village would know he never had done.

So then I take the records of battles on the robe of Mah-to-toh-pa to be matter of historical fact; and I proceed to give them as I wrote them down from his own lips. Twelve battle-scenes are there represented, where he has contended with his enemy, and in which he has taken fourteen of their scalps. The groups are drawn according to his own rude ideas of the arts; and I proceed to describe them in turn, as they were explained to me.

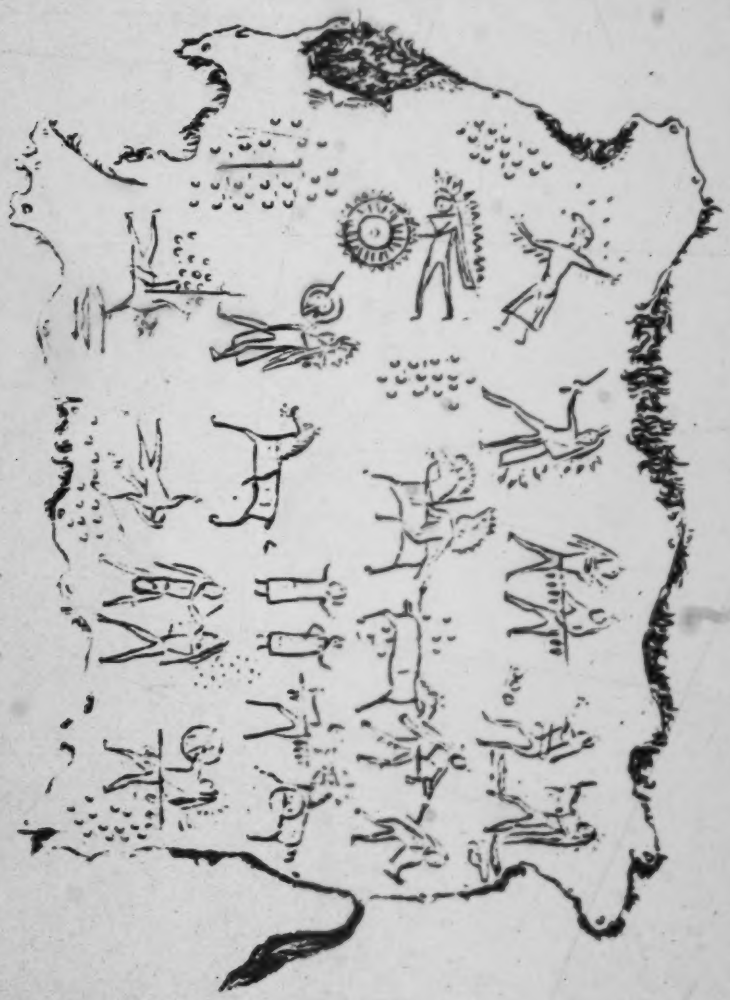
ROBE OF MAH-TO-TOH-PA (Plate 65).

159 ● 721 212 1. Mah-to-toh-pa kills a Sioux chief—the three heads represent the three Riccarees, whom the Sioux chief had previously killed. The Sioux chief is seen with war-paint black on his face. Mah-to-toh-pa is seen with the scalp of the Sioux in one hand, and his knife in the other, with his bow and quiver lying behind him.*

2. A Shienne chief, who sent word to Mah-to-toh-pa that he wished to fight him—was killed by Mah-to-toh-pa with a lance, in presence of a large

* The reader will see in Plate 65, an accurate drawing of this curious robe, which now hangs in the Indian Gallery, and on the following pages, each group numbered, and delineated on a larger scale, which are *fac-similes* of the drawings on the robe.

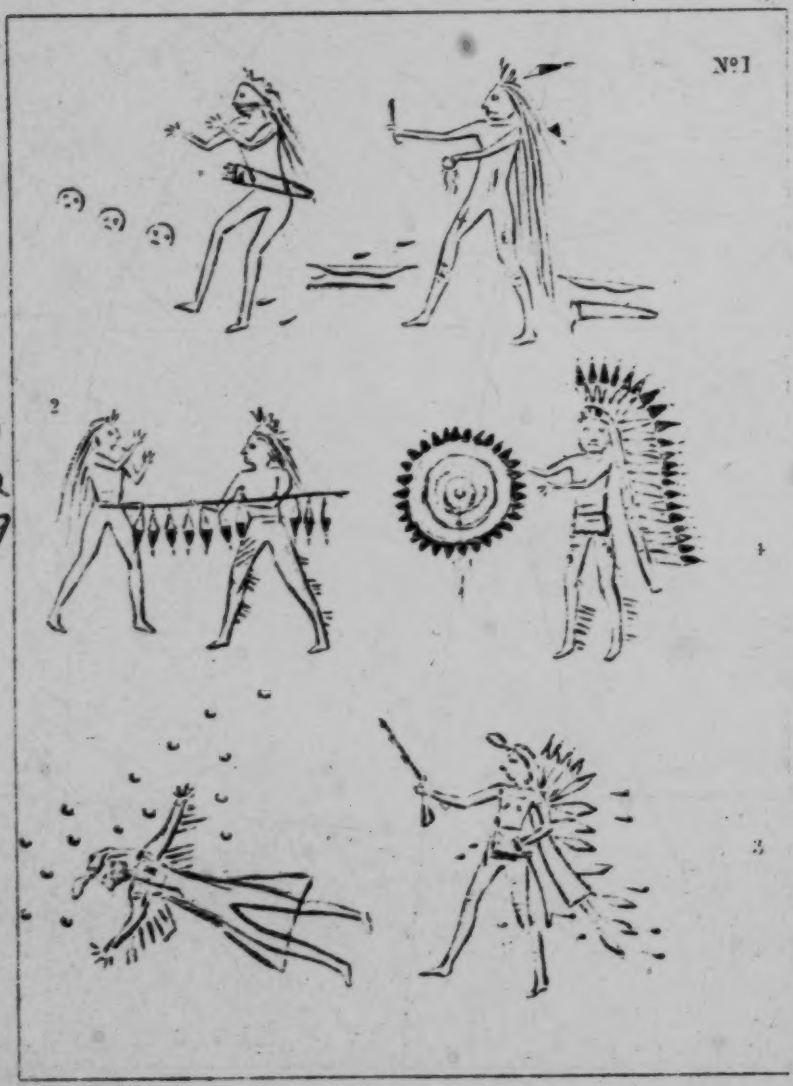
7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17



721
212
159

[p. 148 (A)]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17



● 721
212
159

[p. 148 (B)]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

●721
212
159

[p.148(c)]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

G. Catlin

721
212
159

[p. 148 (D)]

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

159 party of Mandans and Shiennes. Mah-to-toh-pa is here known by his lance
721 with eagles' quills on it.

212 3. A Shienne killed by Mah-to-toh-pa after Mah-to-toh-pa had been left by his party, badly wounded and bleeding; the twenty-five or thirty foot-tracks around, represent the number of Shiennes, who were present when the battle took place; and the bullets from their guns represented as flying all around the head of Mah-to-toh-pa.

4. Shienne chief with war-eagle head-dress, and a beautiful shield, ornamented with eagles' quills, killed by Mah-to-toh-pa. In this battle the wife of the Shienne rushed forward in a desperate manner to his assistance; but arriving too late, fell a victim. In this battle Mah-to-toh-pa obtained two scalps.

5. Mah-to-toh-pa, with a party of Riccarees, fired at by a party of Sioux; the Riccarees fled—Mah-to-toh-pa dismounted and drove his horse back, facing the enemy alone and killing one of them. Mah-to-toh-pa is here represented with a beautiful head-dress of war-eagles' quills, and one on his horse's head of equal beauty; his shield is on his arm, and the party of Sioux is represented in front of him by the number of horse tracks.

6. The brother of Mah-to-toh-pa killed by a Riccaree, who shot him with an arrow, and then running a lance through his body, left it there. Mah-to-toh-pa was the first to find his brother's body with the lance in it: he drew the lance from the body, kept it four years with the blood dried on its blade, and then, according to his oath, killed the same Riccaree with the same lance; the dead body of his brother is here seen with the arrow and lance remaining in it, and the tracks of the Riccaree's horses in front.

159 The following was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary exploits of this
721 remarkable man's life, and is well attested by Mr. Kipp, and several white men, who were living in the Mandan village at the time of its occurrence. In a skirmish, near the Mandan village, when they were set upon by their enemies, the Riccarees, the brother of Mah-to-toh-pa was missing for several days, when Mah-to-toh-pa found the body shockingly mangled, and a handsome spear left piercing the body through the heart. The spear was by him brought into the Mandan village, where it was recognized by many as a famous weapon belonging to a noted brave of the Riccarees, by the name of Won-ga-tap. This spear was brandished through the Mandan village by Mah-to-toh-pa (with the blood of his brother dried on its blade), crying most piteously, and swearing that he would some day revenge the death of his brother with the same weapon.

It is almost an incredible fact, that he kept this spear with great care in his wigwam for the space of four years, in the fruitless expectation of an opportunity to use it upon the breast of its owner; when his indignant soul, impatient of further delay, burst forth in the most uncontroulable frenzy and fury; he again brandished it through the village, and said, that the blood of his brother's heart which was seen on its blade was yet fresh,

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

159 and called loudly for revenge. "Let every Mandan (said he) be silent, and
●721 let no one sound the name of Mah-to-toh-pa—let no one ask for him, nor where he has gone, until you hear him sound the war-cry in front of the village, when he will enter it and shew you the blood of Won-ga-tap. The blade of this lance shall drink the heart's blood of Won-ga-tap, or Mah-to-toh-pa mingles his shadow with that of his brother."

With this he sallied forth from the village, and over the plains, with the lance in his hand; his direction was towards the Riccaree village, and all eyes were upon him, though none dared to speak till he disappeared over the distant grassy bluffs. He travelled the distance of two hundred miles entirely alone, with a little parched corn in his pouch, making his marches by night, and laying secreted by days, until he reached the Riccaree village; where (being acquainted with its shapes and its habits, and knowing the position of the wigwam of his doomed enemy) he loitered about in disguise, mingling himself in the obscure throng; and at last, silently and alone, observed through the rents of the wigwam, the last motions and movements of his victim, as he retired to bed with his wife: he saw him light his last pipe and smoke it "to its end"—he saw the last whiff, and saw the last curl of blue smoke that faintly steeped from its bowl—he saw the village awhile in darkness and silence, and the embers that were covered in the middle of the wigwam gone nearly out, and the last flickering light which had been gently playing over them; when he walked softly, but not slyly, into the wigwam and seated himself by the fire, over which was hanging a large pot, with a quantity of cooked meat remaining in it; and by the side of the fire, the pipe and tobacco-pouch which had just been used; and knowing that the twilight of the wigwam was not sufficient to disclose the features of his face to his enemy, he very deliberately turned to the pot and completely satiated the desperate appetite, which he had got in a journey of six or seven days, with little or nothing to eat; and then, as deliberately, charged and lighted the pipe, and sent (no doubt, in every whiff that he drew through its stem) a prayer to the Great Spirit for a moment longer for the consummation of his design. Whilst eating and smoking, the wife of his victim, while laying in bed, several times enquired of her husband, what man it was who was eating in their lodge? to which, he as many times replied, "It's no matter; let him eat, for he is probably hungry."

[574] Mah-to-toh-pa knew full well that his appearance would cause no other reply than this, from the dignitary of the nation; for, from an invariable custom amongst these Northern Indians, any one who is hungry is allowed to walk into any man's lodge and eat. Whilst smoking his last gentle and tremulous whiffs on the pipe, Mah-to-toh-pa (leaning back, and turning gradually on his side, to get a better view of the position of his enemy, and to see a little more distinctly the shapes of things) stirred the embers with his toes (readers, I had every word of this from his own lips, and every attitude and gesture acted out with his own limbs), until he saw his

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

way was clear; at which moment, with his lance in his hands, he rose and drove it through the body of his enemy, and snatching the scalp from his head, he darted from the lodge—and quick as lightning, with the lance in one hand, and the scalp in the other, made his way to the prairie! The village was in an uproar, but he was off, and no one knew the enemy who had struck the blow. Mah-to-toh-pa ran all night, and lay close during the days; thanking the Great Spirit for strengthening his heart and his arm to this noble revenge; and prayed fervently for a continuance of his aid and protection till he should get back to his own village. His prayers were heard; and on the sixth morning, at sunrise, Mah-to-toh-pa descended the bluffs, and entered the village amidst deafening shouts of applause, while he brandished and shewed to his people the blade of his lance, with the blood of his victim dried upon it, over that of his brother; and the scalp of Won-ga-tap suspended from its handle

Such was the feat represented by Mah-to-toh-pa on his robe—and the lance, of which I have just spoken, is seen in the hand of his portrait, which will stand in my Gallery, and of which I have thus formerly spoken:—"The lance or spear of Mah-to-toh-pa, when he stood for his portrait, was held in his left hand; its blade was two-edged, and of polished steel, and the blood of several human victims was seen dried upon its surface, one over the other; its shaft was of the toughest ash, and ornamented at intervals with tufts of war-eagle's quills."

In the portrait, of which I am speaking, there will be seen an eagle's quill balanced on the hilt of the lance, severed from its original position, and loose from the weapon. When I painted his portrait, he brought that quill to my wigwam in his left hand, and carefully balancing it on the lance, as seen in the painting; he desired me to be very exact with it, to have it appear as separate from, and unconnected with, the lance; and to represent a spot of blood which was visible upon it. I indulged him in his request, and then got from him the following explanation:—"That quill (said he) is great *medicine!* it belongs to the Great Spirit, and not to me—when I was running out of the lodge of Won-ga-tap, I looked back and saw that quill hanging to the wound in his side; I ran back, and pulling it out, brought it home in my left hand, and I have kept it for the Great Spirit to this day!"

"Why do you not then tie it on to the lance again, where it came off?"

"Hush-sh (said he), if the Great Spirit had wished it to be tied on in that place, it never would have come off; he has been kind to me, and I will not offend him."

7. A Riccaree killed by Mah-to-toh-pa in revenge of the death of a white man killed by a Riccaree in the Fur Traders' Fort, a short time previous.

8. Mah-to-toh-pa, or four bears, kills a Shienne chief, who challenged him to single combat, in presence of the two war-parties; they fought on horseback with guns, until Mah-to-toh-pa's powder-horn was shot away; they then fought with bows and arrows, until their quivers were emptied, when they

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

159 dismounted and fought single-handed. The Shienne drew his knife, and
●721 Mah-to-toh-pa had left his; they struggled for the knife, which Mah-to-toh-pa
212 wrested from the Shienne, and killed him with it; in the struggle, the blade of the knife was several times drawn through the hand of Mah-to-toh-pa, and the blood is seen running from the wound.

This extraordinary occurrence also, was one which admits of, and deserves a more elaborate description, which I will here give as it was translated from his own lips, while he sat upon the robe, pointing to his painting of it; and at the same time brandishing the identical knife which he drew from his belt, as he was shewing how the fatal blow was given; and exhibiting the wounds inflicted in his hand, as the blade of the knife was several times drawn through it before he wrested it from his antagonist.

159 A party of about 150 Shienne warriors had made an assault upon the
721 Mandan village at an early hour in the morning, and driven off a considerable number of horses, and taken one scalp. Mah-to-toh-pa, who was then a young man, but famed as one of the most valiant of the Mandans, took the lead of a party of fifty warriors, all he could at that time muster, and went in pursuit of the enemy; about noon of the second day, they came in sight of the Shiennes; and the Mandans seeing their enemy much more numerous than they had expected, were generally disposed to turn about and return without attacking them. They started to go back, when Mah-to-toh-pa galloped out in front upon the prairie, and plunged his lance into the ground; the blade was driven into the earth to its hilt—he made another circuit around, and in that circuit tore from his breast his reddened sash, which he hung upon its handle as a flag, calling out to the Mandans, "What! have we come to this? we have dogged our enemy two days, and now when we have found them, are we to turn about and go back like cowards? Mah-to-toh-pa's lance, which is red with the blood of brave men, has led you to the sight of your enemy, and you have followed it; it now stands firm in the ground, where the earth will drink the blood of Mah-to-toh-pa! you may all go back, and Mah-to-toh-pa will fight them alone!"

During this manœuvre, the Shiennes, who had discovered the Mandans behind them, had turned about and were gradually approaching, in order to give them battle; the chief of the Shienne war-party seeing and understanding the difficulty, and admiring the gallant conduct of Mah-to-toh-pa, galloped his horse forward within hailing distance, in front of the Mandans, and called out to know "who he was who had stuck down his lance and defied the whole enemy alone?"

"I am Mah-to-toh-pa, second in command of the brave and valiant Mandans."

"I have heard often of Mah-to-toh-pa, he is a great warrior—dares Mah-to-toh-pa to come forward and fight this battle with me alone, and our warriors will look on?"

"Is he a chief who speaks to Mah-to-toh-pa?"

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

"My scalps you see hanging to my horse's bits, and here is my lance with the ermine skins and the war-eagle's tail!" 159 721

"You have said enough."

The Shienne chief made a circuit or two at full gallop on a beautiful white horse, when he struck his lance into the ground, and left it standing by the side of the lance of Mah-to-toh-pa, both of which were waving together their little red flags, tokens of blood and defiance.

The two parties then drew nearer, on a beautiful prairie, and the two full-plumed chiefs, at full speed, drove furiously upon each other! both firing their guns at the same moment. They passed each other a little distance and wheeled, when Mah-to-toh-pa drew off his powder-horn, and by holding it up, shewed his adversary that the bullet had shattered it to pieces and destroyed his ammunition; he then threw it from him, and his gun also—drew his bow from his quiver, and an arrow, and his shield upon his left arm! The Shienne instantly did the same; *his* horn was thrown off, and his gun was thrown into the air—his shield was balanced on his arm—his bow drawn, and quick as lightning, they were both on the wing for a deadly combat! Like two soaring eagles in the open air, they made their circuits around, and the twangs of their sinewy bows were heard, and the war-whoop, as they dashed by each other, parrying off the whizzing arrows with their shields! Some lodged in their legs and others in their arms; but both protected their *bodies* with their bucklers of bull's hide. Deadly and many were the shafts that fled from their murderous bows. At length the horse of Mah-to-toh-pa fell to the ground with an arrow in his heart: his rider sprang upon his feet prepared to renew the combat; but the Shienne, seeing his adversary dismounted, sprang from his horse, and driving him back, presented the face of his shield towards his enemy, inviting him to come on!—a few shots more were exchanged thus, when the Shienne, having discharged all his arrows, held up his empty quiver and dashing it furiously to the ground, with his bow and his shield; drew and brandished his naked knife!

"Yes!" said Mah-to-toh-pa, as he threw *his* shield and quiver to the earth, and was rushing up—*he* grasped for his knife, but his belt had it not; he had left it at home! his bow was in his hand, with which he parried his antagonist's blow and felled him to the ground! A desperate struggle now ensued for the knife—the blade of it was several times drawn through the right hand of Mah-to-toh-pa, inflicting the most frightful wounds, while he was severely wounded in several parts of the body. He at length succeeded however, in wresting it from his adversary's hand, and plunged it to his heart.

By this time the two parties had drawn up in close view of each other, and at the close of the battle, Mah-to-toh-pa held up, and claimed in deadly silence, the knife and scalp of the noble Shienne chief.*

* This celebrated weapon with the blood of several victims dried upon its blade, now

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

159 9. Several hundred Minatarrees and Mandans attacked by a party of Assinneboins—all fled but Mah-to-toh-pa, who stood his ground, fired, and killed one of the enemy, putting the rest of them to flight, and driving off sixty horses! He is here seen with his lance and shield—foot-tracks of his enemy in front, and his own party's horse-tracks behind him, and a shower of bullets flying around his head; here he got the name of "*the four bears*," as the Assinneboins said he rushed on like four bears.

721

212

10. Mah-to-toh-pa gets from his horse and kills two Ojibbeway women, and takes their scalps; done by the side of an Ojibbeway village, where they went to the river for water. He is here seen with his lance in one hand and his knife in the other—an eagle's plume head-dress on his horse, and his shield left on his horse's back. I incurred his ill-will for awhile by asking him, whether it was manly to boast of taking the scalps of women? and his pride prevented him from giving me any explanation or apology. The interpreter, however, explained to me that he had secreted himself in the most daring manner, in full sight of the Ojibbeway village, seeking to revenge a murder, where he remained six days without sustenance, and then killed the two women in full view of the tribe, and made his escape, which entitled him to the credit of a victory, though his victims were women.

11. A large party of Assinneboins entrenched near the Mandan village attacked by the Mandans and Minatarrees, who were driven back—Mah-to-toh-pa rushes into the entrenchment alone—an Indian fires at him and burns his face with the muzzle of his gun, which burst—the Indian retreats, leaving his exploded gun, and Mah-to-toh-pa shoots him through the shoulders as he runs, and kills him with his tomahawk; the gun of the Assinneboin is seen falling to the ground, and in front of him the heads of the Assinneboins in the entrenchment; the horse of Mah-to-toh-pa is seen behind him.

12. Mah-to-toh-pa between his enemy the Sioux, and his own people, with an arrow shot through him, after standing the fire of the Sioux for a long time alone. In this battle he took no scalps, yet his valour was so extraordinary that the chiefs and braves awarded him the honour of a victory.

This feat is seen in the centre of the robe—head-dress of war-eagles' quills on his own and his horse's head—the tracks of his enemies' horses are seen in front of him, and bullets flying both ways all around him. With his whip in his hand, he is seen urging his horse forward, and an arrow is seen flying, and bloody, as it has passed through his body. For this wound, and the several others mentioned above, he bears the honourable scars on his body, which he generally keeps covered with red paint.

Such are the battles traced upon the robe of Mah-to-toh-pa or four bears, interpreted by J. Kipp from the words of the hero while sitting upon the robe, explaining each battle as represented.

hangs in the INDIAN GALLERY, with satisfactory certificates of its identity and its remarkable history, and an exact drawing of it and its scabbard can be seen in PLATE 99, a.

10: Neill H-4(no date) 1884 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

175 they are represented as a treacherous, deceitful people, always
648 taking advantage of their neighbors, and favoring the Sioux when they come to war this way, and frequently intermix with them to annoy the Mandans and Big Bellies.

SIGN LANGUAGE.

201 This language is entirely different from the natives of this place, and it is only by signs that they usually communicate with each other, excepting a few among them who understand each other's language. It serves as interpreter upon any affair of importance. It is surprising how dexterous all these natives of the plains are, in the art of communicating their ideas by signs. They will hold conference, for several hours together, upon different subjects, and during the whole time not a single word will be pronounced upon either side, and still they appear to comprehend each other perfectly well. This mode of communication appears to be quite natural to them, other difficult events are performed with the greatest ease and readiness. They never seem to be at loss, or in want of a sign to express their meaning.

COURTESY TO STRANGERS.

648 Soon after our arrival, there was a great uproar occasioned
721 by the unexpected visit of six Pawnees, from their own vil-
728 lage, sixty leagues below this, on the banks of the same (Missouri) river. They were sent upon an embassy to treat for peace. It appears that last spring, some of these people had accompanied a war party of Sioux who came here and killed five Mandans. The latter nation, in company with the Big Bellies (Gros Ventres,) soon after returned the visit, and not finding the Sioux, on their return killed two Pawnees, but this did not satisfy them. They had informed the Pawnees that they might expect a more formal visit the ensuing fall; that both the Mandans and Big Bellies were determined to exterminate every Pawnee they could find, and lay their villages even with the ground.

To avoid this storm, the latter thought prudent to sue for
[202] peace. A messenger was instantly dispatched to the upper villages to give information of their arrival. In the meantime the strangers were very hospitably entertained, conducted into a hut, and presented with corn and beans, dried meats, etc. All were now silent for some time, awaiting the determination of the Big Bellies.

ARRIVAL OF GROS VENTRES.

The Big Bellies[1] in a short time, arrived on horse-back; about thirty men came down full speed; they brought down an inter-

1 [Category 11b, p. 335, -A.]

10: Neill #4(no date) 1884 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

preter with them. They did not appear well pleased, and looked on the Pawnees with an eye of disdain. After some conversation they desired the Pawnees to return immediately to their own villages, and to inform their great war chief, Red Tail, that if he sincerely wished for peace, he must come up and then they would settle matters, as they were determined to have nothing to do with young men. They allowed two moons to consider upon the business, and perform the journey. If, at the end of that time, the Chief did not make his appearance, they would immediately gather up their corn, and in a body, go and find him out, in his own village, and convince him what Big Bellies (or as they call themselves Willow Indians), and Mandans could do when exasperated by the treacherous conduct of the Pawnees.

The six embassies promised to depart early next morning to inform their Chief, who they answer no doubt, would very soon wait upon them. Thus ended an affair, which at the commencement we supposed would conclude with the death of the strangers, by the great bustle and noise their arrival occasioned.

But I was afterwards informed that of such proceedings there was not the least danger; that the natives of this place make it a particular point of honor to protect every stranger who throws himself upon them and begs their clemency. Even their natural and most inveterate enimies, the Sioux, have been known to come into their villages unexpectedly, and were always received with hospitality, and well entertained during thei stay which by the way, they never permit to be more than one night when they are dismissed, and allowed to return to their own homes unmolested.

A HUNTING PARTY.

Towards the evening there was a whooping and howling among the young men who were standing upon their huts. This, it seems, was to announce the appearance of a hunting party of the Mandans, who were just at that moment appearing upon the tops of the high bank to the south, and descending by a well-beaten road towards the village. The party consisted of about one hundred men on horseback, and each loaded with half a buffalo; some of them had even more, according to the strength of their horses, and the master will always ride, be his beast ever so loaded. They had been away since yesterday and found buffalo in great abundance near at hand. These people never go out hunting unless in large parties. The continual danger from their enemies obliges them to be very cautious; another reason is, that when the buffalo comes near at hand, they are anxious to prevent them from being driven away. For this purpose, it is customary for them all, in a body, to surround one herd only, which sometimes consists of several hundreds.